

DIAGNOSIS OF A NEW BEAKED WHALE OF THE GENUS
MESOPLODON FROM THE COAST OF NORTH CAROLINA

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A beaked whale sixteen feet long stranded in the outer bank of Bird Island Shoal in the harbor of Beaufort, North Carolina, on July 26, 1912. The occurrence was reported to the Fisheries Laboratory at noon the same day. When examined, soon afterward, the specimen had been badly mutilated, and in the end only the head, tail, and one of the pectoral fins were preserved. These parts were turned over to the U. S. National Museum by the Bureau of Fisheries, and, upon examination, showed that the animal belonged to an undescribed species of *Mesoplodon*. In order to make it known to science a diagnosis is here given.

MESOPLODON MIRUM, new species

Type specimen.—Cat. No. 175019, U. S. National Museum. A skull with mandible, and partial skeleton of an adult female 16 feet long, which stranded in Beaufort Harbor, North Carolina, July 26, 1912. Collected by the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries Laboratory, Dr. Lewis Radcliffe, director.

Teeth at the extremity of the mandible, small, entirely concealed by the integuments (in the adult female); mandibular symphysis one-fourth the length of the mandible; no basirostral groove. External free border of the lachrymal bone one-half the length of the orbit; its anterior end curved upward and appearing on the superior surface of the skull where it joins the antero-external angle of the frontal plate of the maxilla; maxillary prominences short and directed obliquely outward anteriorly, the extremity close to the maxillary notch. Maxillary foramina behind the premaxillary foramina; frontal plates of the maxillæ approximately one-half as broad as long.

The following measurements and data relative to coloration were furnished by Dr. Radcliffe:

	Feet	Inches
Total length	16	0
Width of flukes, about.....	4	8
Tip of snout to origin of dorsal fin.....	9	0
Tip of snout to origin of pectoral fin.....	3	8
Tip of snout to vent	11	0
Length of pectoral	1	8
Greatest depth of body	3	5

Back, slate-black; lower side, yellow-purple, flecked with black; median line of belly somewhat darker; a grayish area in front of vent; fins the color of the back.

A mold of the head was made at the U. S. National Museum, after which the skull was extracted and cleaned. The dimensions of the latter are as follows:

Dimensions of the type-skull.—Total length, 810 mm.; length of rostrum, 496; length from tip of rostrum to posterior end of pterygoids in median line, 618; greatest height from vertex to inferior border of pterygoids, 301; breadth across centers of orbits, 325; breadth between zygomatic processes, 345; breadth between bases of anteorbital notches, 210; breadth at middle of beak, 60; breadth across occipital condyles, 125; breadth of expanded proximal ends of premaxillæ behind anterior nares, 142; least breadth of premaxillæ opposite anterior nares, 118; breadth of premaxillæ opposite premaxillary foramina, 68; least breadth of anterior nares, 56; least distance between maxillary foramina, 92; distance from posterior border of maxillary foramen to end of maxillary protuberance, 63; length of portion of vomer visible on palate, 162; length of mandible, 668; length of symphysis, 193; greatest height of mandible opposite coronoid process, 117.

This species belongs to the section of the genus in which the basirostral groove is lacking. It differs from all known species, except *hectori*, in that the mandibular teeth are at the extremity of the jaw. From *hectori* it differs in the greater breadth of the cranium, the size and shape of the maxillary ridges, or prominences, and anteorbital notches, the much shorter vertex, and other characters.